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Serving Food Safely in South Dakota's Great Outdoors

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Taking your kitchen into the outdoors is a great adventure. The same safe food handling practices apply in a campground as they do in your kitchen at home. A food-borne illness (often called the stomach flu) can put a damper on your outing.

Plan ahead. Make up a menu, taking into consideration your travel time; camping accommodations; cooking equipment; and availability of ice, water, and food items and solid waste disposal near the camp area.

Pack Safely. Use a cooler if camping or boating. Pack foods in the frozen state if hiking or backpacking.

Keep clean. Soap and water are a necessity. Handy to pack are disposable wipes, hand sanitizer, and biodegradable soap for hand and dishwashing.

Drink only "safe" water. If not available, bring bottled water. Consider boiling water or using purification tablets and a water filter that is designed for backpackers. Never drink water directly from a stream.

Keep cold food cold. Meats, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs, leftovers, salads, and cut fruits need to be kept cold (below 40°F). If not, they should be discarded.

Avoid cross contamination, one of the leading causes of food-borne illness when in the outdoors.

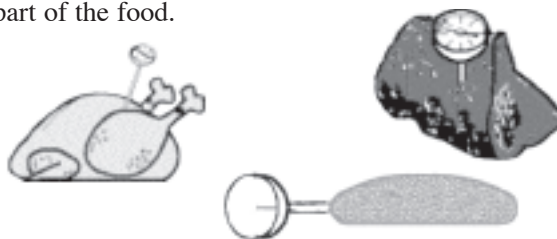
- Place raw meats in a separate cooler from other foods that are ready-to-eat (RTE) or in a sealed container so juices cannot contaminate RTE foods. Examples of RTE include fruits, vegetables, salads, dairy products, cooked meats, and beverages.
- Do not use the same platter/container and utensils for raw and cooked meat, poultry, and fish.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling raw meat and also before and after eating.

- Prepare as much food ahead of time as possible. The less handling of raw meat, the less risk of cross contamination. (You might consider purchasing pre-shaped ground beef patties or chicken already cut up).

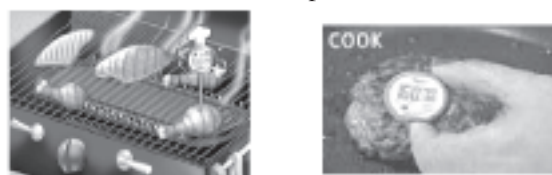
Cook foods to a safe temperature. A food (meat) thermometer should be a part of your camping gear—it is the only way to determine if meat and poultry are cooked to a safe level. **Do not** go by the color of the meat or juices.

How to use an instant read thermometer: Insert in food only when reading the temperature (do not leave in meat while cooking).

If using a **dial** instant read thermometer, place the sensory tip (2 to 2 1/4 inches deep) into the thickest part of the food.



A **digital** instant read thermometer's sensory tip (1/8 inch) must be in the thickest part of the food.



Take the guess work out of outdoor cooking – use a meat thermometer.

Final cooking temperatures

Product	°F
Ground turkey, chicken	165
Ground beef, lamb, pork, veal	160
Fresh Beef	Medium Rare-145 Medium-160 Well Done-170
Fresh Pork	Medium-160 Well Done-170
Chicken & Turkey (whole, wings, thighs)	180
Poultry breasts, roast	170
Freshwater fish	Flaky

These are **minimum** temperature recommendations.
You may want to add 5 to 10 degrees for added safety.

Safe food handling procedures:

1. Wash hands
2. Cut 4 pieces of heavy-duty foil about 18 inches long and put on a table. Spray each piece of foil with non-stick spray.
3. Shape 4 hamburger patties and place a patty on each piece of foil. Wash hands after handling raw meat.
4. Wash a variety of vegetables you like and cut into thin slices. Place the vegetables on top of the ground beef patties.
5. Dribble a couple tablespoons of water over the top of the food.
6. Fold aluminum foil using a drugstore wrap to seal food in foil. (see Camping Hint on page 5 of Roughin It Lite Cookbook from SD Game Fish and Parks and Department of Health.)
7. Put the packet on coals in the fire pit, not in flames. Cook on coals for about 20 minutes, turning every couple minutes. Be careful not to puncture the packet when turning so the liquid does not run out.
8. Use a meat thermometer to make certain hamburger is cooked thoroughly. Cook until at least 160°F. If using a dial thermometer, place thermometer into the side of the patty at least 2 1/4 inches.
9. For variety, hobo dinners can also be made with 1 pound of ring sausage, chicken, or fish divided into four portions. Refer to **Final cooking temperatures** chart for other meat items.

Safe Hobo Dinners

Foil Meal, Serves 4

1 pound hamburger
4 cups assorted raw vegetables (potato, carrot, onion, squash, jicama, mushrooms, and/or turnips)
Non-stick cooking spray

Sources of information:

Food Safety While Hiking, Camping and Boating. USDA Food Safety Inspection Service, June 2002.

Cook It! USDA Food Safety Inspection Service, August 1999.

Pictures from USDA and University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education



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